

780 Main St

South Weymouth, Ma

Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General

Attn: Antitrust Division

One Ashburton Place, 18th Floor

Boston, MA 02108

10/20/14

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the pending merger between Partners Healthcare (PHC) and South Shore Hospital (SSH).

This letter of endorsement is written as somebody who lives in the community and thus considers himself a part "owner", if you will, of the not for profit charitable asset (SSH). It is also written as a member of the community who's family has gotten and will continue to get healthcare at the facility and depends with my and my family's life on that care. It is also written as a member of the medical staff, a former President of the medical staff, and a former member of the Board of Directors of SSH who, when I voted to proceed with the merger, was comfortable that I had done full due diligence and concluded, reluctantly, that a merger was needed and that PHC is (and was) by far the best option for the hospital, staff, and community.

I want to give a little background: When I finished my residency I chose not to practice at a Brigham or other academic institution. I had hoped to join a staff that provided really high quality care in the community, had a not too busy ER, and was not an academic institution. I wanted to join a staff where I could (and in fact did) bring my children on rounds on weekends. I found what I was looking for in SSH and I am very comfortable that I have been part of a staff that has given really good care and quality to my patients. It has been deeply satisfying, challenging, and rewarding. I have, in short, had a good run. There is however one problem, the hospital I joined in 1991 has morphed into a much different place. This is nowhere near the hospital I joined back then. The problem is, and I know this from sitting on multiple committees, having been a voting member of the Board and before that a visitor to the Board, that the facility I joined 23 years ago would have long ago closed. It would long ago have gone bankrupt. It has morphed as the situation demanded into what it is today.

It is the same with this merger. We need this merger so that we can continue to attract talented physicians to the community and staff, we need this so I can continue to provide good care, we need this so I and my family can continue to come to the ER and other departments as a patient with total confidence in the level of care we are getting.

The healthcare world is changing, SSH must change also. PHC is the by far the best organization we can partner with, it offers the best opportunity for me as a practitioner to continue to attract partners when needed, the merger will allow me and other members of the community to maintain total confidence in the care we provide.

Other people can comment on the economics of this merger, it is very clear that experts disagree. What I can speak to is the delivery of healthcare, and I can speak to it about my community from a very experienced position. This I know, the best opportunity for me and my fellow members of the medical staff to continue to provide really high quality care to my community, for the institution to continue to build programs to serve the healthcare needs of the South Shore, for me as a patient to get superior care, lies in this merger. If you look at the converse, should this not happen, it will become progressively difficult to attract physicians, to raise capital for the ever increasing demands of emr etc, and SSH will see a real problem (over time) in the provision of care. In short, the community asset will become less of an asset.

For these reasons I most heartedly did as a citizen of the community, as a patient, spouse and father of patients, as a member and leader of the medical staff, and as a member of the Board of Directors as a fiduciary for the not for profit community asset, and continue to, endorse this merger and feel strongly that it should be approved.

Thank you



John D. Feldman, Md

South Shore Urologic Assoc.

*please note, despite the similarity in name, I am in the private practice of urologic surgery and not an employee in any way of SSH